1 60. A digital information distribution system comprising:

a digital information stream server comprising:

means for storing a digital information stream of predetermined duration;

network adaptation means for transmitting digital information onto a first communication network on a predetermined channel;

request receiving means for receiving requests for said digital information stream from said first communication network;

scheduling means for directing said digital information stream to said network adaptation means for transmission over said first communication network on said predetermined channel at a predetermined time, if a request for said digital information stream is received by said request receiving means;

opportunistic programming means for directing digital information to said network adaptation means for transmission over said first communication network only if said digital information stream is not being transmitted;

a network interface coupled to said first communication network for connecting said first communication network to a plurality of subscriber units via a second communication network, said network interface comprising:

request receiving means for receiving requests originating from said subscriber units, said subscriber units including privileged subscriber units and non-privileged subscriber units;

request relay means for relaying only requests from privileged subscriber units for said digital information stream to said digital information stream server; and

means for relaying said digital information stream from said first communication network to said requesting ones of said privileged subscriber units via said second communication network.

61. The system of claim 60 wherein said scheduling means further comprises means for:

if a request for said digital information stream is received prior to a predetermined time, initiating transmission of said digital information stream starting at a

beginning of said digital information stream over said predetermined channel at said predetermined time; and

if said request for said digital information stream is received after said predetermined time, initiating transmission of said digital information stream at a point in said digital information stream determined relative to said predetermined time so that said digital information stream ends said predetermined duration after said predetermined time.

3 ~~62~~. The system of claim 1 ~~60~~ wherein said first communication network is a hierarchical network.

4 ~~63~~. The system of claim 1 ~~60~~ wherein said opportunistic programming means transmits digital information via said channel only upon request of a subscriber unit when said digital information stream is not being transmitted.

5 ~~64~~. The system of claim 1 ~~60~~ wherein said opportunistic programming means transmits digital information via said channel whenever said digital information stream is not being transmitted.

6 ~~65~~. The system of claim 1 ~~60~~ wherein said digital information transmitted by said opportunistic programming means comprises an alternative video program.

7 ~~66~~. The system of claim 1 ~~60~~ wherein said digital information transmitted by said opportunistic programming means comprises computer data.

REMARKS

I. Status of the Application

This application is a continuation application of s/n 08/568,605 entitled "Video Pedestal Network."

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